



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

**Fort Vancouver National  
Historic Site**

**Vancouver National  
Historic Reserve**

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## **Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Media Release**

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For Immediate Release

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# **Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Celebrates the National Park Service 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary August 25, 2006**

Vancouver, WA - The National Park Service at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site invites the public to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service's creation with a variety of free activities and opportunities.

Visitors to Fort Vancouver NHS will have a number of opportunities to experience what makes Fort Vancouver special as a unit of the national park system, including its archaeology and history.


A special program entitled "Digging Deeper Into the Past" will connect visitors to the valuable information archaeology has provided the public and how it has helped unlock some of the biggest questions about the site, its people, and their history. This program will be offered at 11:00 a.m. Contact station

From 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. a new hands-on program entitled "Company Servant" will begin. In this program, visitors will have the opportunity to directly participate in a unique hands-on program and experience the work of many of the Hudson's Bay Company's employees or "Company servants" – the people who helped make Fort Vancouver a commercial success. Activities available to the public will include mixing, forming and baking sea

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



biscuits in the Bake House; baling furs in the Fur Store, and working with a smoothing plane, miter saw and a miter box in the Carpenter Shop.


In addition to offering free admission to the park and two special programs, the site's two new state-of-the-art digital audio tours will be free to all visitors on Founders Day.

Available on a regular basis to visitors for \$3, the hand-held units allow visitors to choose between two tours of the site. Both the one hour adult tour and the forty-five minute family tour (designed for adults and children) take you through many of the fort's buildings, blending sound effects, authentic dialects, and period music with a fascinating historical narrative.

"Both special programs and both audio tours highlight the behind-the-scenes stories of what makes Fort Vancouver a special place and why it is part of the National System," shared Kimm Fox-Middleton, the park's Volunteer & Special Events Program Manager. "Visitors will learn how the National Park Service was able to reconstruct what was here over 150 years ago and who the people were that did much of the work and in doing so putting Fort Vancouver on the map. It's looking at the past, present, and the future, which helps support the mission of the National Park Service."

Coinciding with Founders Day is the launch of the new National Park Service web presence for all units of the national park system. New website for units of the National Park Service, including Fort Vancouver NHS, will be launched to the public on Founders Day August 25, 2006 at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Online visitors will find a more uniform and user-friendly the web site that is easier to navigate. These new sites are the result of careful planning and collaboration with the parks, regions, and other program offices. Public feedback from NPS.gov surveys, usability testing and focus groups have been crucial to making certain that the design, navigation, and content meets the expectations and needs of site visitors.



Currently, approximately 80% of visitors to NPS.gov are planning a trip to a National Park Service area, and the new designs help assure that visitors find the information needed to accomplish their task while also introducing them to other important content such as educational materials, special event schedules, park studies and reports, and volunteer opportunities.

“The website address for Fort Vancouver NHS will remain the same ([www.nps.gov/fova](http://www.nps.gov/fova)), but the look and content will be greatly enhanced,” noted Greg Shine, Chief Ranger & Historian and the park’s webmaster. “We hope that the public will enjoy the new depth we’ve added to the site.”

Founders Day is an annual event that is celebrated at all units of the national park system. On this day, all national park sites traditionally offer free admission to visitors. The event commemorates the founding of the National Park Service on August 25, 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act into law. It created the National Park Service with the direction to “conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

“Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is one of 388 nationally significant sites,” stated Tracy Fortmann, Superintendent, “and is the only national park in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. We hope that folks will take this opportunity to celebrate with us and enjoy their national park.”

**Background:**

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, a unit of the National Park Service, is the heart of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. The Vancouver National Historic Reserve brings together a national park, a premier archaeological site, the region's first military post, an international fur trade emporium, one of the oldest operating airfields, the first national historic site west of the Mississippi River, and a waterfront trail and environmental center on the banks of the Columbia River. The partners of the Reserve teach visitors about the fur trade, early military life, natural history, and pioneers in aviation, all within the context of Vancouver’s role in regional and national development. The Reserve's vast array of public programs -- including living history events, festivals, cultural demonstrations, exhibits, active archaeology, and other special activities -- create a dynamic, fun, and unique tourist destination for people of all ages.

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